XXVIII. *An Extract of a Letter, giving an Account of a large number of Urns dug up at* North Elmham *in* Norfolk. *Communicated by* Peter Le Neve, *Esq*; Norroy, *F. R. S.*

Docking, July 16. 1711.

SIR,

I Was laſt Week at *Greſſenhall*, where I was inform'd of an unuſual Number of Urns lately diſcover'd in the Neighbourhood of that Place; which being a Curioſity relating to a part of Learning, which you are ſo well acquainted with, and ſo good a judge of, I ſhall take the Liberty of giving you a more particular Account of it, which I promiſe my ſelf will not be unwelcome to you.

In the Pariſh of *Elmham*, about half a Mile from the Town (or better) there is a Cloſe called the *Broom cloſe*, lying on the Weſt-ſide of the Road from *Elmham* to *Beetly*, and belongs to Mr *Harvy* of *Buckenham*. About *Candlemaſs* laſt ſome Labourers were repairing the Fence on the South ſide of the Cloſe, and in the bottom of the Ditch accidentally pitch'd upon a Pot, which they expected to have been full of Money, and fell to ranſacking; but finding nothing but Duſt and Aſhes, went to their Work again, and digging on found two or three more; but (to their great Grief and Diſappointment) the Contents the ſame. When they came home at Night (the value of their Prize giving them no Occaſion to conceal their Diſcovery) they publiſh'd what they had found, and in a little time were inform'd that

they were Urns: The Report of which put ſome Perſons of more Curioſity upon a further Search; and digging firſt under the Hedge, afterward further into the Cloſe, found great quantities of them, and ſeveral very near together. There is one Man in the Pariſh who has been chiefly employed in this Search for ſeveral People, and the Number that he has taken up ſince the firſt Diſcovery, falls ſhort very little of 120. and yet the compaſs of Ground turn'd up on this Occaſion does not amount to more than a Rood of Land (*i. e.* One quarter of an Acre) The Cloſe where they are found is high Land, and this Place the higheſt part of it; the Soil a ſharp Gravel, and very dry, and lies next to a Highway. As for the Urns themſelves, they are generally of the ſame Shape, but of very different Sizes.

The Shape of theſe is conformable to the Repreſentations uſually exhibited in the Deſcriptions of Urns; *viz.* the Bottom narrow, a little flatted (and in ſome quite round) wider upward; the Top contracted to a narrow Mouth: The Earth courſe, the Work rough and uneven, but generally well burnt; ſome of them ſlightly wrought and indented (the Work expreſſes very little Skill or Care) and ſome plain, of which laſt ſort I have one perfectly entire (not yet open'd)

The Size is various; ſome of the Capacity of a Quart, ſome two, ſome three Quarts, and one I have (unopen'd yet) that I believe will contain a Gallon.

The Pots are very tender when they come firſt out of the Ground, and frequently ſuffer by the Wounds of the Spade: They are moſt of them broken (more or leſs) in the taking of them up, and hardly any that have not their Mouths broken; of which many of them ſeem to be done, as they lie in the Ground, by the weight of the Earth preſſing upon them, or the Feet of Horſes going over them, as appears by the broken pieces of ſeveral of them found a good way down among the Earth.

The

The Urns are found at uncertain Depths; ſome very near the Surface, ſome two, ſome three Spits deep, which is the deepeſt any Body has taken the Pains to dig hitherto.

As for the Contents (by what I can hear) they are generally the ſame. I have open'd ſeveral of them, and found in all of them plenty of pieces of broken Bones, ſome Black with burning, and ſome turn'd to Aſhes, with ſome pieces of courſe Glaſs run and ſticking to the Bones; which whether it proceeded from any thing of that kind burnt with the Body, or only the ſandy Earth vitrified with the ſtrength of the Fire (as I am inclined to think) is doubtful. Beſides, I found ſome pieces of Braſs, ſome run, ſome much burnt, and ſome not injur'd, with ſome pieces of Iron, but ſo decay'd with ruſt, that their Figure or Uſe is hard to judge of. I have ſome Knives and other odd things, but much eaten and decay'd with Ruſt: But the Braſs, which is not burnt to pieces, remains generally firm and entire. One thing is remarkable, we find a great many pair of ſmall Nippers (ſuch as we pull out Hairs with) commonly of Braſs; and moſt of them ſo perfect and good, that the Edges are full ſquare, and the Spring as ſtrong as any we can make of the Mettal. Theſe are chiefly the particulars of what we find: But as for Coins (which of all things were moſt to be wiſhed for) we meet with none. I hear of two in the Hands of a Perſon of *Elmham*, but had not an opportunity of examining them: But when they were found or taken up I can't tell. I have one found t'other Day in an Urn, but very imperfect; what remains of the Impreſſion looks more like *Britiſh* than *Roman*; but by the ſhape of the Coin and Mettal it ſhould be the latter, tho' I think not eaſie to determine.

I have here given you an account of our Diſcovery, which I am ſenſible would afford ground for ſeveral

Remarks; but my deſign being only to give you a Narrative, and not to Criticize or make Obſervations, I leave that Province to thoſe who are better able to make a Judgment of theſe Circumſtances. And as it is pretty ſure the Urns are *Roman*, and conſequently that the Number muſt denote a Station or Colony of that People: So I ſhould be glad to hear your Thoughts and Opinion of the Place where that Station was appointed, or Colony planted; upon what Occaſion, and at what time it might be placed there. I am, *&c.*

Note, *Two of theſe Urns, of different ſizes, with pieces of Bones, Aſhes, Teeth, and part of an old Braſs Inſtrument (ſuppoſed to have been a* Roman Fibula*) contained in them, were preſented to the* Royal Society *by Mr* Le Neve, *and are in their Repoſitory at their Houſe in* Crane-Court *in* Fleetſtreet.

XXIX. *Some Obſervations upon* Lough-Neagh *in* Ireland. *In a Letter from* Francis Nevill *Eſq; to the Lord Biſhop of* Clogher.

Belturbet, Feb. 12. 1712-13.

My LORD,

I Hope it will not be amiſs to give your Lordſhip an Account of what I have heard and obſerv'd of our conſiderable Lake *Lough Neagh*, ſo much talk'd of for its changing Wood into Stone, which Report is too much credited by ſome, who do yet live near the *Lough*; but I can aſſure your Lordſhip, there is no ſuch petrifying Quality in that Water. I lived fourteen Years in *Dungannon*